The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

The MBE for volunteer groups

Romsey Young Carers

Helping Young Carers Thrive, Not Just Survive

Trustees Report

Charity Number: 1182278

Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

Reporting Period: 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026



1. Objects

The object of the CIO is to help children and young people residing in the area known as Southern Test Valley, whose lives are affected by looking after, supporting, or living with someone who has a disability; is misusing drugs or alcohol; or who has a long-term illness (physical or mental) by:

- Identifying needs.
- Providing support and services to relieve those needs; and
- Gathering and disseminating information.
- Working in partnership with others to identify and fill gaps in provision, which could benefit young carers and their families.
- Enabling members of the public to volunteer, and/or raise funds for the charity, to use to achieve its objectives.

2. Trustees

The Trustees shall manage the affairs of the CIO and may for that purpose exercise all the powers of the CIO. There must be a minimum of three Trustees, who are appointed for three years, agreed at a properly convened meeting of the charity trustees. When selecting individuals for appointment, the existing trustees must have regard to skills, knowledge, and experience for the effective administration of the CIO.

3. Reserves Policy

The Trustees have a responsibility to only spend Restricted Funds on activities designated by the donor. Any Unrestricted Funds can be used at the discretion of the Trustees if it is within the objects of the Charity. In line with Charity Commission guidelines, the Trustees have agreed to maintain 6 months of running costs to ensure that children, young people, and their families are supported in the event of the Charity not receiving ongoing funding.

4. Achievements and Performance

This year was marked by profile expansion, organisational transition, and community collaboration. Through expanded partnerships, high-impact respite, and tailored school interventions, Romsey Young Carers continued to deliver vital support across Southern Test Valley.

Referrals and Family Support

- **163 Active Young Carers** supported across the year.
- **11 new young carers** registered between January and March 2026 alone, around a 5% increase.
- **Support Vouchers:** Distributed £100 Household Support Fund (HSF) supermarket vouchers to 33 families and provided essential items via local Baby Banks and the Beauty Bank.
- **Parents' Programme:** Hosted engaging family wellbeing events, including a parents' jewellery-making session (attended by 15 parents) and a specialized workshop with a qualified nutritionist from Hartwell Nutrition.

Respite Activities & Holiday Programmes

- **Summer Highlights:** Launch of the Ambassadors Scheme at The White Horse Hotel, collaboration as Charity of the Year with the Beggars Fair, Rotary residential at Avon Tyrrell, YCF residential, Hawk Conservancy trip (40 attendees), and Paultons Park family day with the Romsey Lions Club.
- **Autumn Highlights:** Halloween party at Marie Louise Care Home (85 attendees), farm visits via The Country Trust, Nando's social evening for the Moving On group, and Thorpe Park tickets via Merlin's Magic Wand.
- **Winter & Spring Highlights:** Winchester Science Centre (40 participants), Easter egg hunt at Marie Louise House, axe throwing, 5-day voyage with the Ocean Youth Trust, and cultural outings including *The Red Shoes* at the Mayflower Theatre and climate change theatre performances at the Arch Theatre.
- Over **98 young carers** participated in Easter holiday provision across multiple sessions.





Youth Clubs and Regular Respite

- **4 regular clubs and activities** delivered in early 2026 achieving over **200 young carers individual attendances**. This was supplemented by catch ups with our older young carers several times across the year.
- Expanded club offerings with "Scrap and Sculpt" sessions, visits to the Romsey Play Centre, cookery days led by Chef and Councillor Russell, and pamper "Re-Treat" days at Abbotswood Care Home.
- Continued monthly swimming lessons at Romsey Rapids.



School Engagement

- Engagement expanded to **10 schools** (7 receiving full support packages and 3 participating via assemblies and INSET training).
- **27 school groups** delivered in the final term reaching **203 young carers**.
- Delivered primary awareness assemblies to hundreds of pupils, including a major assembly to 310 pupils at The Mountbatten School.
- Formed new educational partnerships, including staff training and assemblies at Sherborne House School.
- Partnered with an Educational Psychologist to refine and evaluate the school support model



Residentials

- **Fairthorn Manor Residential:** 16 young carers from *Level Up* and *Stepping Stones* attended via "Adventures Away from Home" funding.
- **Ocean Youth Trust Voyage:** 5-day sailing experience for older young carers.
- **Rotary & YCF Residentials:** Annual residential experiences supporting peer connection and resilience.

Volunteers

- **20 active volunteers** (including Trustees) supported ongoing operations.
- Active befriending matches expanded across the year, reaching **7 active matches**.
- Held a dedicated volunteer conference ("The Difference You Make") to celebrate community impact.
- Launched the **Young Carers Ambassador Programme**, naming the Mayor of Romsey (Cllr Russell Theron), Jo Hughes (Max Wifi), and former young carers Sophie Clarke and Jake Mitchener as founding ambassadors.

5. Public Benefit

The trustees confirm that Romsey Young Carers complies with the Charities Act 2011 in demonstrating public benefit. All services are subsidised and accessible to any eligible young carer living or attending school in the Southern Test Valley area, regardless of background or financial circumstances.

6. Structure, Governance and Management

Romsey Young Carers is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) governed by a board of trustees meeting quarterly to oversee strategy, compliance, and safeguarding. Operational delivery is led by Manager Chris Hall (marking 10 years as Manager), supported by core staff,

student Occupational Therapists, and volunteers. Key admin systems and IT processes were upgraded following support from tech volunteers and a donation of 4 laptops from Roke Manor.

7. Risk Management

Key risks and mitigations include:

- **Funding Sustainability:** Transitioning from grant dependency toward a balanced income model comprising corporate partnerships, school contributions, and community fundraising supported by a voluntary fundraising committee.
- **Sector Restructuring:** Adapting proactively to local government reorganisation and early help hub models across Hampshire.
- **Safeguarding & Governance:** Continuous policy reviews, staff safeguarding refresher sessions, and insurance review.

8. Strategic Partnerships and Sector Engagement

- **Hampshire Young Carers Alliance (HYCA):** Active collaboration on county-wide school support frameworks.
- **Equity for Young Carers Project:** Contributed to national sector research and report launches (£2,500 contribution).
- **Academic & Community Alliances:** Delivered paid training sessions to staff at the University of Southampton, established sports partnerships with AFC Totton, and deepened local links with the Romsey Conservative Club, Romsey Male Voice Choir, and Beggars Fair CIC.

9. Future Plans

- Expand corporate networking and fundraising streams via the newly established Fundraising Committee.
- Progress Stage 1 of the National Lottery Community Fund application.
- Deepen school-based support using educational psychology frameworks.
- Maintain active representation in regional youth and carer policy development.

10. Trustees' responsibilities and approval

The trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' annual report and the charity's accounts in accordance with applicable law and the charity's governing document. This report is presented for approval by the board of trustees.

Approved by the trustees on: _____

Signed on behalf of the trustees: _____

Name: _____ Position: _____

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